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Senator Bjorkman
Sen.Jesse.Bjorkman@akleg.gov

cc Konrad Jackson
Konrad.Jackson@akleg.gov

Re: SB225 Draft Proposed CS ver. N

Dear Senator Bjorkman,

My name is Chris Walker, and I am an estate planning attorney in Juneau. The vast majority of my clients are Alaskans who are trying to plan for their families and their assets. Many of them create and administer trusts in Alaska. I have concerns about the provisions of SB 225 introduced Jan. 23, 2026 regarding sealing of court records related to trusts. I am writing with my enthusiastic support for SB 225, as substituted, and specifically for the committee substitute titled “SB225 Draft Proposed CS ver. N,” which addresses nonjudicial settlement agreements (NJSAs).

Alaska has some of the best trust laws in the country. One area for improvement of our law is providing a mechanism to resolve issues outside of court. Under current law, many of these matters go before the court. This is true even when the only parties affected (e.g., trustees and beneficiaries) agree about the appropriate outcome. This creates causes unnecessary expense and delay for Alaskans and adds avoidable burden to our court system.

As you know, non-Alaskans also utilize Alaska’s trust laws and industry. These clients are not a large part of my practice, but their business is valuable to our Alaska. The lack of NJSA provisions in our law causes these clients to either take their business to another state or to use the resources of our courts to resolve the issues that arise with their trusts.

The NJSA provisions included in this committee substitute provide a practical and efficient solution that allows parties to resolve certain matters outside of court when there is agreement, while still maintaining appropriate safeguards.

This legislation is meaningful to my Alaska clients, and it reflects language that has been vetted and supported by members of the Alaska estate planning community.

For these reasons, I strongly support SB 225, as substituted. Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Walker